



April 24, 2014

We are writing in support of the reauthorization of Brand USA and urge your continued support of The Travel Promotion, Enhancement and Moderation Act of 2014 (H.R. 4450 and S. 2250).

Brand USA (BUSA) is funded by international visitors and private contributions – not U.S. taxpayer dollars. Their work promoting the United States is essential in contributing to the U.S. economy and reducing the deficit. Half of BUSA's budget comes from the private sector through cash and in-kind contributions. Many of these contributors are members of Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI).

DMAI represents nearly 600 official destination marketing organizations across the United States. These organizations are charged with promoting their respective destinations and helping the long-term development of their communities through a travel and tourism strategy. Collectively, these cities, counties and states invest nearly \$3 billion annually to fuel the economy and create jobs. While \$3 billion is a significant investment collectively, over 50 percent of DMAI members have total budgets of less than \$1 million. These destinations, in particular, are largely reliant on the representation of Brand USA to drive high value international traveler dollars to their destinations.

In a recent analysis performed by Oxford Economics, the study estimated in FY13 Brand USA generated 1.1 million additional visitors who spent an estimated \$3.4 billion. A 1 percent increase in visitation from America's top 10 inbound travel markets would add more than \$1 billion per year to the U.S. economy - thus offsetting taxpayer burden in local communities and creating jobs.

The travel industry's trade surplus is 6.7 percent higher so far this year compared to the first two months of last year, far better than the 3.4 percent improvement in the U.S. trade balance of other goods and services. Without the \$10.1 billion travel trade surplus so far in 2014, the U.S. overall trade deficit would be 12.4 percent larger. As you consider making the necessary federal budget adjustments and investments our nation needs, we ask you to help preserve the economic stability of destinations by supporting the Travel Promotion, Enhancement and Modernization Act of 2014, including the reauthorization of funding the Brand USA.

Sincerely

Michael Gehrisch
President and CEO
Destination Marketing Association International